

JUNE 2011 BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING

The Board met June 3, 2011, at the Women's Residential Facility in Des Moines. The Fifth Community-Based Corrections (CBC) District Director Sally Kreamer welcomed the Board and guests to the facility. Department of Corrections (DOC) Director John Baldwin informed the Board that the prison population peaked at 9,009 on April 9, 2011, and has been trending downward. The number of offenders released to parole or discharging their sentence upon release from prison has increased. There has been a decrease in new court commitments.

The Director indicated he recently toured the Iowa Medical Classification Center at Oakdale with Representative Anderson and the Directors of Inspections and Appeals and Human Services. They focused on the forensic hospital and mental health needs of the civilian and offender populations. Director Baldwin is also working with a consortium of public and private partners on a report that will provide direction on substance abuse and mental health treatment initiatives.

The DOC is changing its "level" system in the Institutions. The level system determines the level of privileges an offender has. Currently, an offender does not maintain the same level of privileges when he or she is transferred between prisons. Once the Transition Incentive Program (TIP) is implemented, the level of privileges will be more uniform across the system.

General Counsel Michael Savala reviewed proposed changes to administrative rules for jails and holding facilities. The Board reviewed, amended, and approved the rules.

Assistant Attorney General William Hill provided the Board with an update of the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling in California that requires the State to reduce the prison population by at least 33,000 offenders. The case focused on overcrowding and lack of access to medical and mental health treatment. Iowa currently has no similar cases.

Warden Patti Wachtendorf, Iowa Correctional Institution for Women, provided a review of treatment programs currently available plus an update on the construction program. Once construction is completed, there will be 26 acres inside the perimeter security fence, an increase of 36.9%. Bed capacity will increase by 95.2%. The prison focuses on re-entry, substance abuse treatment, relapse prevention, and gender responsive concepts.

Staff from the Fifth CBC District Department provided an overview of specialized treatment options for women. The residential facility has an 8-bed unit that houses women offenders living with a child. There is flexibility in scheduling family visits. The Department also provides gender-responsive treatment and specialized caseloads.

Dr. Tony Tatman provided a brief outline of the Fifth CBC District Department's sex offender treatment program. The Department currently has 3 women offenders convicted of sex offenses. They are treated separately from male offenders.

The next Board of Corrections meeting is in Fort Madison and Burlington on July 8.

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